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Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their implications for international peace, security and development

Security Council
Seventy-second year

Identical letters dated 17 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the so-called parliamentary elections held on 12 March 2017 in the occupied Abkhazia region (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 32, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Elene **Agladze**
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Deputy Permanent Representative

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Annex to the identical letters dated 17 March 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia on the so-called parliamentary elections in the occupied Abkhazia region

On 12 March 2017, the so-called parliamentary elections were held in the occupied Abkhazia region of Georgia. This act represents yet another attempt of legitimization of the consequences of several waves of ethnic cleansing, military invasion, occupation and lasting aggression by Russia against Georgian statehood. Hence, according to international law, any so-called elections or referendums in the occupied territories of Georgia are illegal and cannot have any legal effect.

The so-called elections took place in the context of the Russian Federation not complying with its obligations under the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008 and in parallel with intensified military build-up that continues the factual annexation of Georgia's occupied regions through their integration into Russia's military, political, economic and social system. At the same time, people displaced from Georgia's occupied territories are deprived of the right to return to their places of residence, whereas the population remaining in these regions suffers ethnic discrimination and gross violations of basic rights and freedoms. Against this background, international security and human rights mechanisms, including representatives of the European Union Monitoring Mission, are denied access to the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia appeals to the international community to give a due assessment of the illegal so-called parliamentary elections and calls upon the Russian Federation to respect the fundamental norms and principles of international law.